

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS  
OF THE LATE SENIOR DISTRICT  
JUDGE SOLOMON CASSEB, JR.

**HON. HENRY CUELLAR**

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 3, 2009*

Mr. CUELLAR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the late Senior District Judge Solomon Casseb, Jr., for his dedication and contributions to the city of San Antonio and South Texas community.

Judge Casseb was born in 1915 in San Antonio, Texas. He attended St. Mary's University and University of Texas Law. By 1938, he was admitted to practice and later was enlisted as a Private in the United States Air Force at the break of World War II. After his service overseas, he was honorably discharged with the rank of Major to return home to a private practice of law. Thereafter, he was appointed for 2 terms as Judge of the 57th District Court and later served as Presiding Judge of the District Courts of Bexar County, as well as Presiding Judge for the Fourth Administrative District. It was 1985 when Judge Casseb acquired senior status and began serving as Senior District Judge of Texas. Shortly after in 1987, he received the Texas Bar Foundation's Outstanding Jurist Award. He was a member of the Advisory Committee to the Supreme Court of Texas and the Joint Task Force. Judge Casseb's contribution to the community of law was further recognized when he presided over the critical phases of the Pennzoil versus Texaco case, which resulted in the largest jury award in American jurisprudence. The judgment of that case has been upheld by the Appellate Courts of Texas and proves monumental to the state and Judge Casseb's work.

The progression of Judge Casseb's career went hand and hand with the numerous awards, recognitions, and appointments he received. Early on in his career, he was chosen the Outstanding Ex-Student of St. Mary's University. In 1965, Judge Casseb was named Outstanding Judge of 1965 by the Texas Trial Lawyers Association. Thereafter, he received Lifetime Achievement Awards from the San Antonio Bar Association, San Antonio Bar Foundation and the Laredo/Webb County Bar Association. By 1991, Judge Casseb was named Mr. South Texas at the Annual Washington Birthday Celebration in Laredo. A year later, the University of Texas Law School established the Judge Solomon Casseb, Jr., School in his honor.

Madam Speaker, I am honored to have had the time to recognize the dedication, accomplishments, and commitment of the late Senior District Judge Solomon Casseb, Jr., and I thank you for this time.

IN HONOR OF U.S. ARMY SERGEANT FIRST CLASS JOSE "ROY" PARRA

**HON. SAM FARR**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 3, 2009*

Mr. FARR. Madam Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of U.S. Army SFC Jose "Roy"

Parra, a Salinas, CA native who gave the ultimate sacrifice in service of our nation in 1950.

Born in 1927, Army Sergeant First Class Parra spent his days as a young child delivering the newspaper, The Salinas Californian. Roy learned early on the importance of family and hard work by contributing his wages to his family. At the age of 17, he joined the Merchant Marines and later joined the Navy before enlisting in the Army. After receiving a post in Germany for 3 years, Mr. Parra returned to Salinas in 1949, only to be called to active duty the following year to serve on the Korean peninsula.

As a forward observer for artillery, Mr. Parra found himself on the front lines fighting north across the 38th Parallel and up to Pyongyang. His unit was ordered farther north and halted about 50 miles away from the Chinese border to await supplies. Just three months after being deployed, Mr. Parra was killed in action after he bravely took over a machine gun whose operator had been killed to repel waves of advancing enemy infantry. Sergeant First Class Parra was buried alongside 150 fellow American soldiers in a North Korean field where local Koreans placed unmarked crosses above the fallen.

It took three years before his family learned of his courageous efforts in the moments before he was killed and decades longer until they learned the fate of his remains. In 1954, after three years in a prisoner-of-war camp Lt. Walter Mayo, Parra's commanding officer, wrote to Parra's family detailing how the young man from Salinas sacrificed his life protecting his unit. The prolonged wait to return Sergeant First Class Parra to the U.S. ultimately ended when a recent excavation of a burial field in North Korea turned up remains. As soon as the identity of the remains was confirmed, an Army sergeant was assigned to escort the body of Sergeant First Class Parra home. After an agonizing wait of over 60 years, in August 2009, his family was finally able to bury their fallen hero in Arlington Cemetery.

For his dedication and service, U.S. Army Sergeant First Class Parra was awarded the Purple Heart, the Korean Service Medal, the UN Service Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the Korean Presidential Unit Citation, and the Republic of Korea War Service Medal.

U.S. Army SFC Jose "Roy" Parra was laid to rest with full military honors. Mr. Parra's sister, Lucille Withers, led the fight to identify and bury his remains.

Madam Speaker, I am deeply honored to have the privilege to share his story with you today and on behalf of my colleagues, want to thank U.S. Army SFC Jose "Roy" Parra and his family for their service to our Nation.

HONORING THE SONOMA VALLEY  
CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

**HON. LYNN C. WOOLSEY**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 3, 2009*

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, today to honor the 100th anniversary of the Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce. The Chamber has long served as a spirited defender of the Valley's interests, by encouraging new indus-

try, organizing beautification projects and managing flood control efforts.

The Chamber began the evening of April 10, 1909, when 32 businessmen convened over dinner to discuss how they could stimulate commerce for the benefit of local merchants and professionals.

Membership quickly grew to 100 and the Chamber began their first initiatives, like publishing marketing material and establishing committees to begin tackling an ambitious agenda. In the early years, the Chamber called for transportation improvements and successfully lobbied Congress to protect a local federal facility from closure.

During the Great Depression, the Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce was instrumental in addressing needs of a paralyzed business community. To generate renewed interest in the organization, the Chamber hosted an event benefitting street and driveway improvements.

In the subsequent years, the Chamber pioneered many efforts, including the creation of a commuter bus service to San Francisco, the endorsement of a municipal water system, support for State Parks and advocacy for underground utility and telephone lines. Notably, the Chamber raised local matching funds for a job stimulus program that was part of President Roosevelt's New Deal.

Following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Chamber was designated as a farm labor office tasked with steering workers to local farmers. In the years following the war, the Chamber focused on supporting an adequate sewage system, the introduction of local hospital and the adoption of a zoning plan.

By mid-century, the Chamber hosted an industrial conference, boldly escalating efforts to bring new industry to the Valley.

Today the Chamber has expanded its membership to more than 700 leaders who continue to help ensure a thriving economy through advocacy, promotion, networking, education and services.

Operating under the mantra that "Strong businesses make strong communities", the Chamber hosts events, publishes a business magazine and offers comprehensive business, community and visitor resources. The Chamber also leads recognition efforts, honoring the business of the year and green businesses.

Madam Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that I acknowledge the 100th anniversary of the Sonoma Valley Chamber of Commerce. In years to come, this organization will remain an integral and powerful force that continues to enrich the business community for the benefit of all Sonoma Valley residents.

RECOGNIZING THE 101ST ANNIVERSARY  
OF THE POINT ARENA  
LIGHT STATION

**HON. MIKE THOMPSON**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, November 3, 2009*

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise to commemorate the 101st anniversary of the Point Arena Light Station on the magnificent Mendocino Coast in northern California.

A beacon to mariners since the original Point Arena Lighthouse was constructed in